

Haller's Eagle Bakery
(Pacifico Bakery)
1206-10 5th Avenue
Fourth Ward Neighborhood
Altoona
Blair County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5846

HABS
PA,
7-ALTO,
53-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HALLER'S EAGLE BAKERY
(Pacifico Bakery)

HABS
PA.
7-ALTO,
53-

HABS No. PA-5846

Location: 1206-10 5th Avenue

Date of Erection: 1924-25

Additions: 1938 and 1967

Description: A steady growth and enlargement is visible in the fabric of this commercial/industrial structure, the site of Haller's Eagle Bakery for more than seventy years.

Three sections faced in yellow brick with brownstone trim front on 5th Avenue. A main building of two adjacent two-story structures with compatible parapet facades is joined at right by a later one-story addition. The central section, No. 1208, houses the current entrance at its left, at the approximate center of the main facade. It appears to have been built first, with the matching left-hand addition made soon after.

These two parts of the main double structure are similar but not identical. Although front windows in the left are now infilled with brick, the patterning of infill and a 1948 advertisement illustration suggest that fenestration in the two sections was also similar but not identical. In each first floor, windows are grouped in twos and threes with sills and lintels of vertically-laid brick; in the second they are individually placed and trimmed in rough-faced stone. Inset square and diamond-shaped medallions provide trim to the simple parapets; these have been removed at left. A brownstone marker reading "John Haller" in relief is centered above the second-floor window level in the left-hand block. This facade has been extensively reworked--an entrance door at right is the only remaining opening, and five vertical steel supports have been applied to the exterior above the brick.

The one-story addition to the right of the main building has a central door with large glass-block windows at each side. Like the others, it has a yellow brick front with red brick side walls and a flat roof.

History: The first bakery on this site was that of Albert J. Heess, who purchased a 65' x 120' lot from Mary Miller (through the will of her father John) in April 1896 for \$5,000. The 1896 Altoona directory shows Albert J. Heess, Jr., a baker, at 1208 5th Ave., with his home at the same address. Heess was the son of A. F. Heess who ran the Altoona Steam Bakery at 8th Avenue and 13th Street. In 1900 Albert Heess Jr., was taxed as a baker at 1210-12 5th Ave., for 65' of land, a bakery, and one dwelling.

John Haller purchased the bakery (on its 65' x 120' lot) from Heess on September 5, 1903, for \$9,000. According to newspaper accounts, Haller was a German immigrant who served a baker's apprenticeship in Pittsburgh before coming to Altoona. He worked at two established Altoona bakeries before starting his own at 13th Avenue and 18th Street, where his business operated for eight years until he purchased the Heess bakery.

The exact chronology of building on this site is difficult to unravel, in part because the location of bakery operations seems to have moved within the complex of existing buildings. A combination of newspaper accounts, tax assessment records, Sanborn insurance maps, and stylistic considerations seem to indicate that the central section of the current street front structure was built in 1924 and 1925 as office and retail space. A two-story addition, the section at left, was made in 1938, when it was reported that

the new building in its architectural aspects will conform with the other buildings embraced in the baking firm's plant and will front on Fifth Avenue, replacing an old structure on part of the site. It will be two stories high.

A 1948 full-page advertisement in the Altoona Mirror shows the completed two-part facade. The one-story addition at right was added in 1967.

HALLER'S EAGLE BAKERY
(Pacifico Bakery)
HABS No. PA-5846 (Page 2)

John Haller added his wife, Anna, to all titles for the bakery property in February 1923. The business was incorporated in 1926 when his three sons became his partners. Through the 1930s, Fred J. Haller (wife Birdie B.) was foreman at the bakery, Fred M. was treasurer, John (wife Anna) was president, John Jr. (wife Alma) was secretary, and William M. was vice president. In April 1940, the Hallers consolidated their holdings, almost half a city block, under one deed in the name of Haller's Eagle Bakery. Soon after, Haller's three sons traded corporate positions.

Haller's Eagle Bakery was large and successful; this is evident in numerous newspaper articles highlighting new construction, equipment purchases, and the introduction of new products. Even during the Depression of the 1930s Haller's continued to expand and was declared Pennsylvania's model bakery. Yearly anniversary celebrations were written throughout the 1930-40s. Each year a new structural improvement was highlighted, and a special anniversary cake marketed in local stores.

Haller's Eagle Bakery at this site was sold to the Blair County Industrial Development Authority in October 1978. The premises is currently rented to Pacifico Bakery, which uses it as a distribution center.

Sources: Maps: 1894, 1909. Deed books: R/286, 109/602, 144/564, 300/411, 453/55, 1022/186. City directories. Tax Assessment records. Altoona Mirror (December 16, 1926; November 11, 1930; November 3, 1934; April 12, 1936; September 23, 1938, October 14, 1941; July 24, 1942; April 13, 1947; April 10, 1948; February 14, 1967.

Project Information: This report was part of a larger project to document the city of Altoona, Pennsylvania. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), Robert Kapsch, chief, at the request of America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP), Randy Cooley, director. Overviews of the history of the city (HABS No. PA-5784) and the fourth ward neighborhood (HABS No. PA-5786) provide context for these buildings as well as a comprehensive list of sources. See also additional HABS reports on buildings in the city and other neighborhoods.

This report was prepared by Susan Garfinkel in the summer of 1989 under the supervision of HABS senior historian Alison K. Hoagland and Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian. Garfinkel's and other project historians' work was published as Railroad City: Four Historic Neighborhoods in Altoona, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: HABS/HAER, National Park Service, 1990), edited by Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian, and Sara Amy Leach, HABS historian.

HALLER'S EAGLE BAKERY
(Pacifico Bakery)
HABS No. PA-5846 (Page 3)

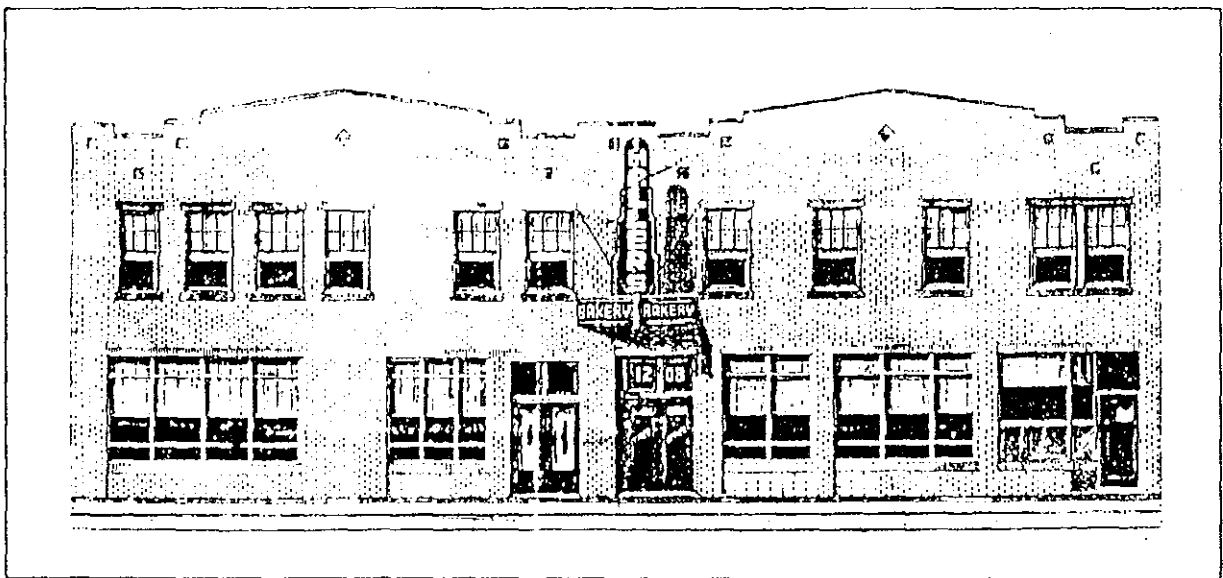


Fig. 1.1 Haller's Eagle Bakery, 52nd anniversary advertisement, Altoona Mirror (April 10, 1948).